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# REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

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Saturday, November 15. 1707.

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**I**N discoursing of our Losses and Disasters in my last Paper, I told you of a new Enemy risen up against us; but before I enter too far into it, give me Leave a little to paraphrase upon the thing; I told you, that our High-Flying Gentlemen falling into a Fit of Religion, begin to cant as well as their Neighbours, and tell us, that Heaven fights against us, that GOD has forsaken us, that he visibly declares War with us, blasts all our Enterprizes, and succeeds all our Enemies, and the like— And did not two things taint their Doctrine with the visible Marks of a false Prophecy, I should let them go on, if they pleas'd; but it is apparent to me, the Delusion is of the Devil, and to serve his interest.

1. Because the Reasons, they assign, are such as we know are inconsistent with the Nature of GOD's Providence, and contrary to the universal Course of his Judgments

in the World—viz. That it is for our carrying on an unjust War, and our dispossessing unjustly the right Line, as they call it, of our Kings—Both which being put into true, native, undissembled English, ought to be call'd fighting against Idolatry and Oppression in the World, and deposing Tyranny at Home; which are things so plainly agreeable to the usual Method of Providence in the Government of the World, and so visibly has the Hand of that Providence acted and appear'd in all the Steps of it, that to say these are the Reasons of GOD's seeming to lay his Hand upon us, is to say, he acts against himself, and is pulling down his own Kingdom in the World, which would be horrid Blasphemy to suggest.

2. Because these Gentlemen say this from a wicked Principle, and preach to us of the Judgment of GOD, not in order to make us, like Christians, apply to Hea-

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ven by Repentance and Humiliation, like Nineveh, but that we might despair, and run into all Manner of Distractions, in order to be ruin'd and compleatly destroy'd.

But after all, it is in it self a useful Consideration, that it has not pleas'd GOD to give us this Year the Success we have had; He has not seem'd to go out with our Armies, and appear with our Navies, as he has formerly done; He has not bleis'd us in our going out and in our coming in, our Basket and our Store, meaning our Commerce, as he has formerly done— And what have we to learn from this? Indeed too many things for me to teach you, and perhaps what you will disdain to hear from so mean a Hand, nor do I doubt of the same Return, a like despicable Teacher met with in the Gospel, *Thou wast altogether born in Sin, and dost thou teach us?* 9. John 34. No, Gentlemen, I will not teach you at all, I will but put you in Mind, what you have been taught already— And I'll send you to two School-masters for your Teaching, the Scripture, and the King of France.

Innumerable Texts correct us from the infallible Instructor, and tell us, that we neither behave in our Prosperity or in our Adversity, like a People that expected their Success from Heaven; in Prosperity how exalted, in Adversity how peevish!—With Success how puffed up, how sacrificing to our Sword and our Bow, how idolizing Instruments, and forgetting our Maker!

In our Losses and perplexing Difficulties, how are our Eyes fix'd upon the Mis-carriage of Instruments, as if the whole Weight of our Losses depended upon the Villany of Traytors!—Have you Traytors, have you Spyes, have you corrupted Agents among you? Has French Money touch'd the Hands, and tainted the Hearts of any of our great Ones; bring them out with the Priests of Baal, and let them be hew'd in pieces before the Lord; make a Sacrifice to the People of the wicked Instruments, But pray, Gentlemen, do not rest there. Can Traytors sell you, can Fools undo you, can false Friends betray you, can Cowards dishearten you, and the permitting Judgment of Heaven not be concern'd in it? Can this Evil be in the City, and the Lord has not done it? Decieve your selves as you please, and rail at Traytors, and a-

mong them, call your best Friends so, as you never fail to do, but be assur'd this thing is of GOD—And if you won't see it, you must be blind, and go on till you come to the Pit; GOD grant you may open your Eyes, before you fall in.

I have often observ'd, that *Adam and Eve*, two People I suppose, those few of you that trouble your Heads about the *Bible* may have heard of, were a very loving agreeable Couple, and if you will believe Mr. Milton, had the Perfection of Conjugal Love towards one another— But as soon as ever they sinn'd, they fell out; and just so it is among us, as soon as ever we fall into Mistakes, and Mischiefs follow as naturally, they will immediately fall together by the Ears, and fly one at another; this is long of you Knaves, and this of you Knaves— But who looks up, and says, this is long of all of us?

As to Mismanagements of persons and Instruments, GOD forbid, I should plead for the least Offender; nay, if a Man had serv'd us 19 Times, and sold us the 20th, according to our old English *Mode of Friendship*, I am in this Case for forgetting the 19 good Turns, and let him be hang'd for missing the last One— *Not that I justifie the Practice neither*, the Meaning is plain; but let us come to Particulars according to the Text, *in the Time of Adversity consider*, and let me lead you by the Hand to some Cases, in which the visible Hand of GOD's Providence has been against us, in which the most quarrelsome, froward Temper in the World canfor say, this or that Miscarriage has been the Occasion of it, or this or that great Man has not done his Duty; but mere abstracted Providence has done the Work, and told you, however he has affilid us in other Cases, that for all this his Anger is not turned away, but his Hand is stretched out still; and if you will not see it, you must let it alone.

I could go farther back with you, but I'll begin at the great Storm, the like of which has not been parallell'd in these Parts of the World; and it would be endless to repeat the Circumstance of it, its Violence, its Duration, the Ruin it brought upon us by Land, and particularly by Sea, and more particularly upon the Navy; a Particular of which has been printed at large.

I might put the *Barbadoes* Merchants in mind of their Success in three Years together ; once with the Hurricane there, the second Year by the Enemies, coming home, being separated by bad Weather from their Convoys, and the third Year by a dreadful Storm upon them in the Sound at Plymouth. In all these they can talk of no Mismanagement, other than what had provoked Heaven to take their Punishment into his own Hand.

But I come nearer the present Day of our Complaint— And first, pray, Gentlemen, who can you accuse for locking you up four Months the last Year, when your Army was ship'd, and putting at *Nolamus* or Prohibition from Heaven upon our purposed Descent into *France*— I never heard, any had the Face to reproach the Admiral, for not making the Wind blow, or to say, our Design was betray'd to the *French* King, and he had Wind bound us, till the Season was over ; I have seen no Mismanagement charged upon our Navy-Office neither, for not directing such Ships to be built, as might be fit for such Expeditions, and sail without or against the Wind, and go to Sea, whether GOD Almighty would or no— All our Murmurs were silenc'd on this Head, and no Man can call it any thing but *Dignitatem Dei*.

Again, come we to *Flanders*, who will you charge it upon ? That the continual Rains of the wettest Summer, that has been for these 20 Years, protected the Enemy from your Attacks, made it impossible for us to follow them, or to form our Troops for a Battle, when Opportunities seem'd otherwise to offer themselves : Let the Accusers of their Brethren stand forth now, and let us see them impeach the Duke of *Marlborough*, that he did not like his Brother General, the brave *Sofus*, command the Clouds to hold up, or the Rain not to descend, while the Slaughter of those *French* *Amorises* was over ! And was it the *French* General that brought these Rains down for their Protection, to make the Country impracticable, and the Rivers unpassable ; where will our continual Murmurers fix their clamorous Argument, and who will they challenge for this ?

Again, Gentlemen, who drove the *Dutch* and *Hamburong* Fleet from the *Texel* into

the Mouths of the *French*, and stranded them upon their Enemies Shoar ? Who made them seek to be taken into *Neuport*, *Dunkirk* and *Calsis*, for Fear of Death by the Tempest ? This was no Mismanagement I am sure, nor were any of the Statesmen among the *Dutch* answerable for this Disaster.

What can be said for the *Russia* Fleet, would any Body imagine they should not be safe, when 16 Men of War had seen them safe to the *North Cape*, or would you not have call'd it Nonsense to have sent a Squadron of *English* Men of War to *Arch Angel* ? If Enemies lie where no Enemies ever lay before, and where no Men could have expected them, Will any Man call this Mismanagement, or blame Conduct for it ?

To go on, we are now come to the Fleet from the *Streigis* ; who split our Admiral upon the Rocks, and who droye the Fleet out of their Knowledge ? What Fate hurried a thousand brave Fellows to their last Moment, and at one Shock dash'd them into Eternity ? All these things are out of the Reach of Mismanagement.

Shall we come on Shore, and enquire, who blasted the Fruits of the Earth, and ruin'd your Summer Corn ? Who burnt up the Grass, and gave you a Dearth of Food for the Cattle, the Effects of which is felt in the Countries, and in your Purses in the City, tho' surfeited with Plenty, you are insensible of the Hand ? Is it not he that can curse your Blessings, and when he pleases, send Leanness into your Bones ?

Thus far now I am very sure, the Hand of Providence has been singly employ'd upon us, and the Agency of Man is perfectly unconcern'd ; no Room is left here for your Murmurs and Clamours, nor can you blame any Body, you dare mention here. Where are you then, you Sons of Discontent, that are always crying out, *Treason*, *Treason* ; bussing and railing at Instruments, and have too much Passion employ'd in your Resentment, to give you Time to look up to that Invisible Hand that afflicts you, and much less to the Causes for which he does it ?

If your Miscarriages are from Man, let Man be call'd to an Account for them, and let Justice be seen unbias'd and unbound'd, *Curia Lex* ; but have a Care, Gentlemen, of doing by your Losses, as you do by your